

# JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

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*Published by the Commission on Public Relations  
of the National Christian Council of Japan*

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CABLE CODE: JAPACONCIL, ADDRESS: CHRISTIAN CENTER, 24-CHOME GINZA, TOKYO, JAPAN

Subscription Rates: Japan ¥700; Foreign (Sea mail) \$2.00; (Air mail) \$3.50.

No. 139 February 1, 1959

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Rev. Akira Ebisawa Passes

The man who served the National Christian Council of Japan from 1926 in various capacities passed away on January 6 at the age of 75. The Rev. Mr. Akira Ebisawa died just after completing a history of the Protestant movement in Japan for the centennial celebration this year. For many years he was the Executive Secretary of the NCC and also made significant contributions in related activities.

From 1926 to the formation of the United Church of Christ in Japan just prior to the Pacific War, he was General Secretary of the NCC and represented the church in Japan at many international Christian meetings. In 1927 he went to China for meetings of the NCC in that country. The following year he went to the United States to attend the International Missionary Council. In 1931 he again went to China for the 10th anniversary celebration of the China NCC. In 1932 he was a delegate to the International Missionary Council in Germany, and in 1935 to the Northfield Conferences in the States. Again in 1938 he was an official delegate to the IMC in Madras, India. He became General Secretary of the NCC again after the Pacific War.

The Christian Literature Commission will publish his history of the Protestant movement during this centennial year.







Among the other activities that Mr. Ebisawa engaged in were efforts to establish the Christian Children's Fund, Inc., the Japan Church World Service, and a general organization to aid the blind. His life work was with the National Christian Council and he contributed greatly to the ecumenical movement in Japan. The Education Ministry of the government is planning an award for him which will be announced soon.

#### Christian Conference on Shikoku Patronized by Government

A Family Life Movement Conference sponsored by the NCC was held from January 27 to 29 at the City Hall of Matsuyama City on Shikoku Island. The Governor of Ehime Prefecture gave his high patronage to the consultation and consequently welfare officials, parole officers, juvenile court representatives and school teachers attended this conference.

The Rev. Shinji Iwamura, who is a graduate of Tokyo University and a member of Andover-Newton Seminary in Boston and also of Hartford Seminary, attended the Family Life Conference in Thailand last year at which time representatives from all over Asia were present. He is now a member of the NCC Commission on Family Life. He headed a consultation in Tokyo at the Ginza Church last fall. The Pastor of the Matsuyama Church attended the Tokyo meeting and introduced Mr. Iwamura to the Governor of his home Prefecture. In this way the results of the All-Asia conference in Thailand last year are reaching many corners of Japan.

The significant feature of the Matsuyama meeting, as it is viewed by the NCC, is that a Christian minister is being used by a public-government institution to study one of the basic problems in Japanese culture today. Basic to Japanese morality was the concept of the Emperor as the central figure and the nationalistic spirit. Family life was feudalistic. After the war, the Imperial power was weakened and an era of freedom began. The basic strength of the moral system was therefore gone. Home life and youth leadership was in confusion. This same situation exists at present. Therefore the moral education system in both public and private schools is also an issue now. As one NCC official expressed it, "The government has been cool toward the Church in the past but the trend seems to be changing."

#### Shikoku Christian College Accredited

Shikoku Christian College, supported by the Japan Mission of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S., was one of two institutions in Japan to receive accredited junior college status during 1958 according to an announcement by the Japan Ministry of Education last December. Major departments in the college are English language and Christian Studies. The English Department prepares young people for teaching positions in junior high schools, opportunities in business firms requiring a knowledge of English, interpreters, and tourist guides. Graduates of the college have made successful transfers to college and seminary in the U. S. A.

The Department of Christian Studies prepares candidates for seminary and fits graduates for service as missionary helpers and other church related occupations. Students in this department can select courses in the field of social service preparatory to teaching social studies or doing social case work.







Founded in 1950, Shikoku Christian College is the only accredited Christian institution of higher learning on the island of Shikoku of more than 4 million population. All faculty, both full and part time are Christians. Denominations chiefly represented in the faculty are the Reformed Church and the United Church of Christ in Japan. Three members of the Presbyterian Mission give full time to teaching in the college and one serves part time.

The campus is situated on a beautiful 26 acre tract of land formerly used by the Japanese Cavalry. It is in the center of Zentsuji City and is one hour by train from the prefectural capital, Takamatsu.

College facilities are being used for small and large scale meetings of the Reformed and United Churches, Inter-Varsity Movement, Church World Service and others. Pastors of various denominations are also invited to speak at the daily chapel service. The college library offers the use of its 15,000 volumes to pastors and other interested persons all over the island.

#### Stanley Jones Campaign Begins This Month

Dr. E. Stanley Jones will be here on the fourth of this month to open his sixth nation-wide evangelistic campaign. This effort will have as its outstanding characteristics an emphasis on Ashram-type meetings and an emphasis on the development of the prayer life of the Church. With him is a team of three: Mrs. Mary Webster, lay evangelist; Dr. Akbar Abdul-Haqq, educator and evangelist of India; and Dr. Thomas Carruth of the Methodist Prayer Life Movement.

Dr. Jones, with this team, begins his schedule the day after his arrival here with mass meetings in Tokyo. The outline of the itinerary follows:

February	5--9	Tokyo mass meetings
"	10	Yokosuka mass meeting
"	11--13	Ashram at Amagi sanso
"	14--16	Nagoya, Ogaki, Toyohashi mass meetings
"	17--19	Ashram at Arima Hot Spring
"	20--22	Kobe meetings
"	24--26	Osaka meetings
"	27 to	
March	--1	Kyoto and Otsu meetings
"	3--12	Ashram and Preaching in Kyushu
"	10--12	Fukuoka Ashram
"	13--19	Ashram and preaching in Chugoku and Shikoku
April	7--9	Ashram for Tohoku and Ou area
"	14--16	Ashram for Hokkaido
"	18--21	Tokyo meetings

Dr. Akbar Abdul Haqq is a native of the Punjab, and a second-generation Christian. His father was a Muslim priest who was converted after reading the New Testament, and for many years has been an evangelist among the Muslims.







Dr. Haqq holds three degrees from the University of the Punjab, and has done graduate work in the United States, at Garret Biblical Institute and Northwestern University, receiving the Doctor of Philosophy degree in the history of religions. He has taught at Forman Christian College at Lahore, Pakistan, and is now President of the Henry Martyn School of Islamics at Aligarh.

Dr. Thomas Carruth is the Secretary of the Prayer Life Movement in the Methodist Church, which is a part of the General Board of Evangelism of the Methodist Church. He has been very successful in putting prayer into the life of the churches of many denominations. He, with Dr. Melvin Evans, is a member of the group of three persons who manage the Eight Ashrams in America. He spent last summer in the Ashrams and believes that this movement is perhaps the most significant movement in the churches to-day.

Dr. E. Stanley Jones says of Mrs. Webster, "Mary Webster is a very dynamic witness for Christ. She gets hold of all classes, from big industrialists to students and children. I wrote about her in my book, Growing Spiritually, (Weeks 30 to 32). She has grown marvellously since then and is now an illustration of what we are talking about in the presentation of the Gospel. She has been with us all through the Ashrams this summer, as also is Dr. Carruth. If I should comb America for two effective workers who would bring something of vital importance to the Japanese Churches I could not get two more effective persons than these two.

#### Church World Service Distributes Gifts in Remote Japan

At the end of last year the Church World Service gathered gifts of money and articles from churches and Christian schools in this area and sent them to the remote areas of Hokkaido and the Toohoku District. To villages where there are no electricity and train services and no newspapers, gifts were distributed to 65 schools and 2,000 children.

An elementary school principal from Hokkaido with a total of 21 pupils in his school wrote that the children were extremely happy over the gifts of two gloves and one softball. In Yamagata Prefecture word was received from one principal that there is no newspaper service in their area and books are more desired than anything else, particularly biographies of famous men and women. In Aomori Prefecture at Towada-cho school, the principal, Mr. Doi, sent a letter telling that they were 24 kilometers from the nearest bus stop. They were grateful for the gifts and their greatest desires for the future are to have a portable radio and an accordion.

In all a total of ¥230,000. was sent in addition to gifts. Church World Service officials are gratified with the response and plan to make further efforts to send cheer and relief to these backward areas.







### Christmas Television Programs

On Christmas Eve, 1958, from 5:20 to 5:50 there was broadcast over Radio Tokyo TV a special Christmas Eve Candle Light Service, produced by AVACO's Director, Mathew S. Ogawa. This program featured the hymns and solos of a special choir trained for the occasion, reading of scripture with projection of appropriate slides, and a sermonette. Ministers of the United Church and Episcopal, Lutheran and Baptist Churches participated. The time was purchased by the Hakuyosha Cleaning Company, whose president is a Christian. The service was telecast directly from the Koishikawa Hakusan Church of the United Church of Christ in Japan.

In addition, AVACO made available the Nativity Story, a 16 mm. film produced by the American Bible Society, with Japanese sound track added by AVACO, for telecasting on Christmas Eve in Fukuoka, the largest city on the island of Kyushu.

### Famous Quartette Records for Kyodan Program

This month, the "Dark Ducks", the most famous male quartette on Japanese radio and television, recorded hymns for AVACO at a nominal fee. These hymns will be used during the coming weeks on the radio program AVACO is producing for the United Church of Christ in Japan. This program, called "Friend of the Heart", is broadcast each Sunday morning at 6:30 over Radio Tokyo, one of Japan's most powerful stations, which covers a potential listening audience of twenty million.

The "Dark Ducks" have a regular thirty minute television program during premium evening time in the Tokyo area, one of the most popular programs in the capital. Their willingness to record for AVACO almost free is due to the fact that two of their number are earnest Christians.

"Friend of the Heart" has been broadcast since the beginning of December. This month the program received an average of twenty cards or letters each week, indicating a gradually increasing number of listeners. The United Church pays for the purchase of time and AVACO covers the production costs of the program.

### "Songs of the Heart" Movement Songbook Published

Ten thousand copies of a small songbook containing a selection of fifteen favorite hymns has been published by AVACO, in cooperation with NCC-related churches. This songbook is designed to publicize and be used in the "Songs of the Heart Movement", a movement now being promoted by AVACO and NCC-related church groups to develop singing groups in factories, offices, churches and schools. This hymnbook designed for use along with collections of recreation and folk songs, also introduces the purpose and goals of the movement and promotes AVACO's radio program, "Songs of the Heart". The plan is that the radio program and the singing groups in the working place shall re-enforce each other. The book sells for fifteen yen or about four cents.

Hymns are widely loved by non-Christians as well as Christians, and young people earnestly desire such opportunities for fellowship as are provided by singing groups. It is believed by proponents of this movement that this is one of the best ways to conduct occupational evangelism. There are already several such singing groups in the Osaka area which have been in existence for some years.



